



# Brownfields Showcase Communities

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

*Brownfields are abandoned, idled or underused industrial and commercial properties where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived contamination. In May 1997, Vice President Gore announced a Brownfields National Partnership to bring together the resources of more than 15 federal agencies to address local cleanup and reuse issues in a more coordinated manner. In 1998, this multi-agency partnership designated 16 "Brownfields Showcase Communities"—models demonstrating the benefits of collaborative activity on brownfields. In October 2000, the partnership selected 12 additional "Brownfields Showcase Communities" to continue the success of the initiative. The Brownfields Showcase Communities are distributed across the country and vary by size, resources, and community type. A wide range of support will be leveraged, depending on the particular needs of each Showcase Community.*

## BACKGROUND

The Brownfields Initiative was launched to empower states, local governments, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together to assess, clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields.

Communities have asked for more coordination among all levels of government, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations.

The federal agencies participating in the Brownfields National Partnership will offer special technical, financial, and other assistance to selected communities. Brownfields Showcase Communities are models demonstrating the benefits of focused, coordinated attention on brownfields. The project is the centerpiece of the federal government's Brownfields Initiative and provides a pattern for future cooperative efforts in addressing other environmental and economic issues.

## GOALS

The goals of the Brownfields Showcase Communities project are to:

- Promote environmental protection and restoration, economic redevelopment, job creation, community revitalization, and public health protection through the assessment, cleanup, and sustainable reuse of brownfields;
- Link federal, state, local, and non-governmental action supporting community efforts to restore and reuse brownfields; and
- Develop national models demonstrating the positive results of public and private collaboration in addressing brownfields challenges.

## COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Communities are expected to benefit from designation as a Brownfields Showcase Community in a variety of ways. The communities benefit directly from targeted technical and financial assistance. A federal employee is assigned to each Showcase Community to assist with coordination of technical and financial support and to address the myriad of environmental issues. The Showcase

Communities demonstrate successful brownfields activities, providing national visibility for a community's brownfields efforts. Showcase Communities have been recognized for their innovative and successful approaches to addressing brownfields and serve as role models for other communities facing similar situations and challenges. Participating agencies and programs vary for each Showcase Community depending on the particular community's needs and plans. For example, a large city might be served by different programs and resources than a small community. Financial assistance, technical support, and grants from participating agency programs are subject to the requirements of those programs.

## FEDERAL PARTNERS

Federal agencies participating in the Brownfields Showcase Communities project include:

- Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)
- Department of Agriculture (USDA)
  - U.S. Forest Service (USFS)
  - Rural Development (RD)
- Department of Commerce (DOC)
- Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA)

- Department of Defense (DOD)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- Department of Education (ED)
- Department of Energy (DOE)
- Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
  - National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)
  - Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry (ATSDR)
- Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Department of the Interior (DOI)
  - National Park Service (NPS)
  - Office of Surface Mining (OSMRE)
  - Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)
- Department of Justice (DOJ)
- Department of Labor (DOL)
- Department of Transportation (DOT)
- Department of the Treasury (Treasury)
- Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)
- Federal Housing Finance Board (FHFB)
- General Services Administration (GSA)
- Small Business Administration (SBA)

## The Brownfields Showcase Communities



## THE SHOWCASE COMMUNITIES

In October 2000, the following 12 Showcase Communities were designated. They include nine federally designated Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities, four small/rural communities, two tribes, and one Base Realignment and Closure Community (BRAC).

*Mystic Valley Development Commission, MA (Cities of Everett, Malden, and Medford)* has joined three cities working on “Telecom City”—a regional technology development project aiming to move the three communities into the new economy.

*New Bedford, MA* has created a successful brownfields program that provides a model for older port cities trying to clean up and revitalize their community.

*Niagara Region, NY* includes the Cities of Buffalo and Niagara Falls and the Counties of Niagara and Erie, forming a unique regional collaboration to reverse declining economic conditions through brownfields cleanup and redevelopment with a focus on the Niagara Region’s role as an international portal.

*Cape Charles/Northampton County, VA*’s success in creating the nation’s first eco-industrial park serves as a powerful example of how a small, impoverished rural community can bring economic opportunity to its citizens through brownfields cleanup and redevelopment.

*Jackson, MS* is revitalizing its downtown and preserving its heritage by cleaning up and redeveloping sites in the city’s historic district—the oldest post-emancipation African-American residential and commercial area intact today.

*Milwaukee, WI* is targeting the redevelopment of “mothballed,” privately owned idled brownfields properties in the Menomonee Valley, using a new state statute that strengthens cities’ bargaining power in negotiations with private property owners.

*St. Louis, MO/East St. Louis, IL* are working to help foster bistate and bicity collaboration and revitalize the region through brownfields cleanup and redevelopment.

*Houston, TX* is using its brownfields program to redevelop city core properties and deal with sprawling urban expansion.

*Des Moines, IA*’s impressive coalition of public and private entities focusing on brownfields redevelopment has enabled the city to make progress in creating a more livable community through preserving farmland, creating jobs, and increasing the tax base.

*Denver, CO* is expanding its successful brownfields redevelopment strategy into three of the city’s low-income neighborhoods that have large minority populations and are heavily impacted by industrial uses.

*Gila River Indian Community, AZ*, a small federally recognized tribe located adjacent to Phoenix and its sprawling growth, is tackling its need for jobs and affordable housing through brownfields cleanup and redevelopment, which includes a closed military base.

*Metlakatla Indian Community, AK*, the remotely located home of the Metlakatla Indian Community, is a federally designated Enterprise Community that is promoting sustainable economic development through brownfields cleanup and redevelopment while restoring and protecting the Community’s natural resources.

The first round of 16 Showcase Communities, announced in March 1998, has leveraged more than \$900 million in economic redevelopment funds.

They are:

Baltimore, MD	Lowell, MA
Chicago, IL	Portland, OR
Dallas, TX	The State of Rhode Island/ Providence
East Palo Alto, CA	St. Paul, MN
Eastward Ho! (Southeast FL)	Salt Lake City, UT
Glen Cove, NY	Seattle/King County, WA
Kansas City, KS/MO	Stamford, CT
Los Angeles, CA	Trenton, NJ

**Contacts**

For more information regarding Brownfields Showcase Communities, please contact:

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Or, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/showcase.htm>